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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ANKARA 007426

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/16/2015  
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PTER](#) [TU](#) [IZ](#) [CY](#) [ECON](#)  
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S INTRODUCTORY CALL ON TURKISH PM  
ERDOGAN

Classified by Ambassador Ross Wilson, E.O. 12958, reasons 1.4  
(b) and (d).

11. (C) Summary: Ambassador used his December 15 introductory call on Turkish PM Erdogan to lay out USG priorities for bilateral relations. He reiterated U.S. commitment on the PKK issue but cautioned that expectations need to remain realistic. Erdogan echoed the Ambassador's views on the importance of U.S.- Turkish collaboration and appealed for greater U.S. action against the PKK. He said Turkey will not open ports and airports to Greek Cypriots nor ratify the Ankara Agreement extension protocol absent a lifting of the embargo on the "TRNC." He also asked the U.S. to reconsider Qualified Industrial Zones (QIZs) in Turkey. The Ambassador urged a pragmatic approach on Cyprus and stressed that any useful conversation about QIZs would have to omit textiles. End Summary.

#### Laying Out USG Priorities

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12. (C) Ambassador said that in all his consultations before coming to Ankara, the clear message was a strong interest in Turkey and in improving U.S.- Turkish relations. Secretary Rice has referred to a "strategic partnership of extreme importance" at his swearing-in. The Ambassador explained that his priorities are continuing and building upon the recent improvement in bilateral relations to produce results for our peoples; working with Turkey on regional issues, most importantly Iraq; and supporting Turkey's reform process.

#### PM Erdogan on Bilateral Relations

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13. (C) PM Erdogan thanked the Ambassador for his remarks and agreed on the critical importance for Turkey of its special, unique relationship with the U.S. Both sides should continue to strengthen bilateral dialogue and partnership. The PM noted that there are those in the media and think tanks on both sides who want to "sabotage" relations. There are media reports that his Justice and Development Party (AKP) government is trying to create an "Islamic regime" in Turkey. Stories like this create a mistaken image of Turkey in the U.S., hurt us and ruin communication, he said.

PKK

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14. (C) Erdogan noted recent opposition party attacks on his AKP government for, among other things, its relations with the U.S. He said his government will continue its present course despite the attacks, but more demonstrations of U.S. support would bolster it. Erdogan acknowledged the utility of his December 13 meeting with CIA Director Goss (septel), but added "we need results on terror as soon as possible."

15. (C) Erdogan noted he had just met with representatives of Turkey's associations of PKK victims' families. They have strong feelings about the PKK issue and blame "some circles" for the PKK's continued existence. Every fallen soldier creates sensitivities, he added. Erdogan called for another trilateral U.S./Turkey/Iraq meeting on the PKK. The U.S. and Turkey must work together against the PKK as we worked together against terrorism in Afghanistan and other places.

16. (C) The Ambassador expressed great sympathy for the victims in Turkey of PKK violence and said he looked forward to meeting the groups Erdogan had just seen. He agreed fully on the need for a comprehensive joint strategy against the PKK and said he will work with the PM and the Turkish government on it. A number of important efforts are now proceeding, and had been discussed during the visits of FBI Director Muller and Director of CIA Goss. There would, of course, be no magic bullet, our efforts would take time, and both sides need to make certain expectations remain realistic. The Ambassador told the PM this is a high-priority issue for the U.S., adding that our efforts on behalf of a strong, democratic and secure Iraq are at the heart of our PKK strategy.

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QIZs  
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17. (C) The PM said he wants closer economic relations with the U.S. and asked the Ambassador what could be done to create Qualified Industrial Zones - QIZs in Turkey similar to those in Jordan and Egypt. The Ambassador noted the history of the issue. To the extent a QIZ with Turkey might be reasonable, it would have to be correctly focused and, in all likelihood, exclude the sensitive textile sector. We could explore the issue, but it would not be easy.

Cyprus  
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18. (C) Erdogan said that Turkey's efforts to settle the Cyprus issue had been frustrated by the Greek Cypriot rejection of the 2004 referendum, and that the EU had failed to keep its promises to Turkey and Turkish Cypriots since the referendum. According to Erdogan, European leaders are now telling him they consider that Turkey's signing the Ankara Agreement extension protocol constitutes recognition of the Republic of Cyprus, after promising him previously they would not.

19. (C) Erdogan said the EU should not expect anything from Turkey on ports and airports, nor would he submit the extension protocol to parliament, until the "TRNC" embargo is lifted. Turkey expects serious support from the U.S. on this issue.

110. (C) The Ambassador said he appreciated the PM's comments and cautioned that Cyprus would not be solved quickly. He urged the PM to focus on pragmatic steps Turkey could take over the next several months in order to keep the issue from impeding Turkey's EU accession process.

WILSON